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ABSTRACT

Designed to be useful for the assessment of existing collections and facilities as well as for planning new libraries, these guidelines detail specific needs, considerations and possibilities, and specifications for both materials and area planning. The materials section includes separate treatment for various types of books and other publications, art objects and realia, and audiovisual materials and equipment. Area planning is broken down by age group and functional area, including work areas for staff and program rooms. Also included are a list of behaviors observed in children's rooms, factors to be considered in determining book collection size, and an audiovisual philosophy statement. (RAA)

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ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN COMMITTEE

CONSIDERATIONS

BEFORE WRITING

A PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDING PROGRAM IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

by the CONNECTICUT ENVIRONMENTS
FOR CHILDREN COMMITTEE

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BEHAVIORS OBSERVED IN CHILDREN'S ROOMS

These are some of the actual activities and behaviors that happen in a children's department of a public library. They must all be taken into account when planning space. They are also subject to reinforcement, control, or modification by the careful planning and manipulation of the amount and quality of the space.

Laughing

Talking - quietly
loudly

Reading

Looking

Touching

Playing - quietly
noisily

Crying

Writing

Eating

Fighting or Scuffling

Hiding

Acting

Making faces

Working or Studying

Throwing

Sleeping

Humming

Climbing

Crawling

Scribbling

Painting

Listening

Watching

Running

Spilling

Whining

Creating

REQUESTS FOR FORMULAS TO DETERMINE MATERIALS STANDARDS

Requests for formulas to determine standards for book collection size, and collection needs occur frequently. At present no such formulas are available from the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), mandated by the ALA to serve children ages 0-14. ALSC was formerly known as the Children's Services Division (CSD). In this absence the comments below will provide important points to consider:

1. Specific knowledge of the current (local) child population analyzed by age groups i.e. preschool; primary; intermediate; older age groups. Knowing the statistics of the local birth rate over the last five years is an example of specific information needed for planning service projections.

2. Clear understanding of the contents and services of other community organizations' book resources - resources such as those in public school libraries; in private schools; possibly in museums, in churches, in existing Special Collections such as ethnic, etc. Understanding also the plans for maintaining such collections. What relationships are there to the goals of the public library collections?

3. Possibilities for cooperative planning, or cooperative use, if not already established. May be desirable to plan and implement carefully.

4. Record keeping of daily information questions and use of these statistics in developing the collection in terms of user needs and interests.

5. Analysis of existing patterns of library use by children may reveal problems children have getting to the library, and/or its outlets, leading to plans to project services to reach the outer population rings which may affect collection size.

6. Need for duplicate copies of books in demand should be clearly understood and practiced .. the increasing range of children's materials in paperback is relevant to note here.

7. Relationships between the Central Children's book collections and the local branches (and bookmobiles) must be established with intralibrary loan and reserve procedures.

8. It should be recognized by those not familar with Children's Services that traditionally materials for children are selected to meet a wide range of abilities and interests, and that in larger collections this includes adding adult books of interest to children.

9. Per capita figures are not currently agreed upon - flexibility is important to maintain in evaluating and re-evaluating the local situation at regular intervals to provide for the local needs.

--written by Faith Hektoen, Consultant
at the request of the Committee -
March 13, 1978

AUDIO-VISUAL PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The provision of audio-visual facilities in the children's section of the library should be based on an understanding of and a commitment to the philosophy behind provision of audio-visual facilities in the adult section of the library and in the library's overall program. Children should be given equal consideration when AV facilities are planned so that access to hands-on use of media both in production and active participation and in program and appreciation is not limited by age or size.

The library should have a detailed, descriptive written program stating goals and objectives for the inclusion of audio-visual services, defining responsibilities for administering and staffing with children's needs for access to AV services clearly stated so that the library has, or is planning toward, their own projection equipment, sound recording and playback equipment, microfilm reader, copy machine (if possible). The rule of thumb is equal consideration.

Provision should be made for stimulation, potential for evaluation and feedback on the part of the children, for discovery (hands-on use of at least some equipment), variety and choice, creativity and production.

When construction is planned, cable and other video facilities should have outlets in children's area.

NEEDS:

circulating and non-circulating materials
production and passive use provided for opportunities for variety
of use: spontaneous
hands-on
individual

SPACE:

ability to darken screen area
flexibility of arrangements - many outlets
darken small area
presentations for daily sized groups
service for every age level
possibility for private use

STAFF:

familiarity of staff with all facilities and equipment - production
programming

MEDIA:

provision of as many of the following as practical

<u>images</u>
<u>active participation</u>
graphics
slide showing and making
overhead use and transparency making
video
typewriter

images:

passive
film
video
slides

sounds:

active participation
voice
recording on tape and cassette
musical taping

passive
radio
recorded sound/listening facilities

NOTE: If equipment is not loaned centrally, then provision must be made for loan by children's department. Typewriter: primer type preferred, but if donation offered a regular typewriter is a good start.

Connie McCarthy, AV Consultant,
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Film Committee

I. THE MATERIALS

A. Picture Books (a picture book is defined as "that distinctive type of publication...in which the written narrative is brief and the story-line is largely presented through illustrations" - MacCann and Richard)

1. Needs:

   a. Quick access to specific title.
   b. Low shelving for use by preschool child.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Picture books are oversized and need deep shelving. Some picture books are very small but should be interfiled.
   b. Picture books are very thin and need dividers at regular intervals to keep from falling over.
   c. Some slope shelving either interspersed among shelving or tops of units can be sloped to allow for face out display of book covers.
   d. Floor bins can create browsing area, but are more space consuming than spine-out shelving and require flipping through every book to locate specific title.
   e. Low, rotating circular shelves of different width/length.

3. Specifications:

   a. Shelf unit no more than 36" high, accommodating two shelves.
   b. Shelves 12" deep.
   c. Movable dividers every 6" or so, and movable shelves
   d. Estimate eight picture books per 6" long divider; six dividers to 36" in long shelf.

B. Beginning to read (Publishers early reading series)

1. Needs:

   a. Quick access to specific title.
   b. Low shelving for use by preschool child.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Books tend to be standard size (8½" x 6").
   b. Dividers recommended to keep shelves orderly.

3. Specifications:

   a. Shelf unit no more than 36" high, accommodating three shelves.
   b. Estimate seven books to 6" divider.

C. Fiction and non-fiction

1. Needs:

a. Low enough for use by primary as well as intermediate and older age children.
b. Quick access to specific title.
c. All material in one classification must be shelved together (no need to check an oversized area) for ease in locating and quick access.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

a. Much non-fiction and some fiction is oversized. It is essential that it be interfiled.
b. Interspersed slope shelving for face out display.
c. Bottom shelf tilted for better display.

3. Specifications:

a. Shelf units no more than 60" high, accommodating four shelves to a unit.
b. Shelves 12" deep.
c. Movable shelves.
d. Estimate thirty-five books per 36" long shelf.

D. Paperbacks

1. Needs:

a. Visibility of all spines preferred for quick access to specific titles.
b. Face out display of many covers to encourage browsing.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

a. Paperbacks come in many different sizes. The majority of children's paperbacks are oversized.
b. Lucite rotating racks.
c. Wire racks hung on pegboards to accommodate picture book sized paperbacks.

3. Specifications:

a. Gaylord No.8621 (five tier chrome and plastic carousel displayer) (five tier unit accommodates all but picture book sized paperbacks).

E. Periodicals

1. Needs:

a. Face out display of at least one issue of each title for good visibility.
b. Easy access to current back issues.
c. Shelving low enough for primary grade access.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Seldom possible to shelve upright because too flimsy, little or no identification on spine.

3. Specifications:

   a. Movable, slope shelves for current issues (that can be raised).
   b. Storage shelves for back issues underneath slope shelves.
   c. No more than 60" high.
   d. Movable labels.

F. Realia*

1. Needs:

   a. Display some Realia to encourage use (beware of overcrowding).
   b. All Realia should be accessible and easy for patrons to examine.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Accommodate a variety of sizes.
   b. Storage for circulating and non-circulating (plan for programming use).
   c. Movable storage units that attach to wall with plexiglass fronts.
   d. File cabinets.
   e. Open shelves.
   f. Glass cases/closed cases.
   g. Catalog of library Realia with pictures.

*For detailed consideration of Realia consult Toys To Go, ALA

G. Picture/Pamphlet/Maps Storage

1. Needs:

   a. Low enough for use by primary children.

2. Specifications:

   a. Files no more than three drawers high - pullout or open out.
   b. Map cases for oversized items.
   c. File boxes to highlight special collections.
   d. Accommodate commercial study prints (21 x 55-1/2 x 28-5/8 in. Highsmith).

H. Poster Collection

1. Needs:

   a. Easy access to all posters.
   b. Display of some posters so patron may be encouraged to borrow.

2. Considerstions and possibilities:

   a. Map cases for flat storage.
   b. Dry mounting for protection.
   c. Laminating for protection.
   d. Pegboard for display
   e. Bins for upright storage.

I. The Art Print Collection (circulating Framed Art of interest to children). We suggest visiting museums for ideas as you plan.

1. Needs:

a. Place to see some of the collection.
b. Ability to browse through what is "in".
c. Ability to see what is owned by the library for purposes of reserving.
d. Easy to get at and handle (i.e. prints should not fall back to crush users' hands).
e. Sufficient space to move prints in bins.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

a. Some wall space to hang part of collection.
b. A movable display rack to house remainder of collection.
c. A series of bins to house remainder of collection (most bins damage frames).
d. Wall area to support leaning pieces.
e. High shelf space to hold remaining pieces.
f. Deep shelf space to house remaining pieces.
g. Some sort of catalog including photographs of holdings for reserve purposes - may be housed near card catalog* with clear directional information leading patron to it.
h. Non-fluorescent lighting so true colors show.
i. Collection will have a variety of sizes.
j. Frames strong and durable enough to remain undamaged with use (many have hardware that loosens or breaks easily).

3. Specifications and characteristics:

a. Wall-fastened pegboard: storage and excellent display.
b. Bins: storage and limited display-damages on ends.
c. Movable pegboards: storage and excellent display but tend to break down within a year or two.
d. Ledges: display and storage - may be hard to get at (face forward) if placed too high.
e. Deep shelves with ridges - shelved "library-book-style" no display; difficult to retrieve.

*may be at either the circulation or the information desk.

J. Art Objects

1. Needs:

a. Items chosen on basis for child to handle, and on interest of children.
b. Display some items so children realize they are available.

2. Consideration and possibilities:

a. Plan for storage.
b. May be used in programming.
c. Change display items.

K. Recordings/Cassettes

1. Needs:

   a. Face-out display of some covers
   b. Low enough for use by pre-school children.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Ability to examine all covers.
   b. Recordings interfiled with book collection.
   c. Recordings/cassettes to be included by subject heading in catalog.
   d. Accommodate cassettes as well as LP's discs.

3. Specifications:

   a. LP's raised bins no more than 36" high.
   b. Cassettes, circular rotating cassette racks no more than 60" high.

L. Filmstrips

1. Needs:

   a. Accessibility of titles together with visibility of titles.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Accommodate accompanying cassettes and paperback guides.
   b. Materials may be in open or closed storage.
   c. Materials may be interfiled with book stock.
   d. Materials to appear in subject catalog.

3. Specifications:

   a. Some extra wide shelves (12 and 14 inch).
   b. Drawer units, see examples in library catalogs.
   c. High density storage.

M. Films

Before beginning - a decision must be made as to whether or not children's films are to be kept with or separate from adult films and whether they are available for library use or circulation.

1. Needs:

   a. Clean, well conditioned films for effective programming.
   b. Easily booked for accessibility.
   c. Easily located information about what is available and what rules exist for their use.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Annotated listing of all films, with running time; suggested uses and age group; and noting animated or live action, color, B/W.
   b. May integrate all children's and adult films into one collection to circulate.
   c. May integrate all children's and adult films into one collection for library programs.
   d. May be housed separately for library programs:
      1. in Children's Services
      2. in Film Department
      3. in Programming Area
      4. in Storyhour Area
   e. Adequate aisle space to file and retrieve film cans, and with all labeling easily visible to searchers.

3. Specifications:

   a. Racks to hold sufficient number of films for anticipated size of collection.
   b. Closed cabinets in which to store racks to protect them from fire, water, humidity.
   c. Cleaning, circulation and maintenance should be done in central location for one library system.

N. Audio-Visual Equipment

1. Needs:

   a. Variety of equipment to provide depth of services.
   b. Circulating and non-circulating equipment.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Sound filmstrip projector.
   b. Sound filmstrip viewer.
   c. Cassette players.
   d. Record players with earphones.
   e. Film projector (sound, 16mm).
   f. Slide-cassette projector.
   g. Television set.
   h. Videocassette playback equipment (perhaps in cooperative project with libraries, etc).

II. THE AREAS

A. Pre-School (ages 0-6)

1. Needs:

   a. Place for adult and child to share materials together.
   b. Place for adults.
   c. Place for children.
   d. Lounge seating for extra comfort.
   e. Child-size private place.
   f. Washable table tops.
   g. Comfortable, practical colorful*, inviting furniture.
   h. Furniture able to withstand adult weight also.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Love seat/platform rocker.
   b. Imaginative pieces of furniture for visual surprise that do not cause behavior problems.
   c. Modular units children can manipulate.
   d. Adjustable and/or folding furniture.
   e. Puppet theater.
   f. Rotating selections of different kinds of materials such as Realia and art objects.
   g. Carpeting.
   h. Different heights.
   i. Different textures.

B. Intermediate (ages 6-11)

1. Needs:

   a. Small group study and browsing area.
   b. Individual study.
   c. Comfortable, inviting seating.
   d. Furniture scaled to patron size (consider adjustable/folding)
   e. Color* that is inviting and psychologically sound.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Study carrels.
   b. Lounge seating.
   c. Private storage spaces.
   d. Carpeting.

*Bibliography, see

C. Older Children (ages 11-14)

1. Needs:

   a. Similar to ages 6-11 but marked need for this age group to have its own territory.
   b. Individual study.
   c. Small group study area and browsing.
   d. Comfortable, inviting area.
   e. Washable table tops.
   f Personalized.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Study carrels.
   b. Lounge seating.
   c. Carpeting.
   d. Access to a quiet area shared with other age groups.

D. Display area. (Note that these can be/will be incorporated into pre-school; intermediate; older; program areas).

1. Needs:

   a. Child must be able to see all display areas and manipulative exhibits, etc.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Community information for activities and/or services available for children or their adults (parents, teachers).
   b. Display of art objects, hobbies, collections, crafts at child's eye level.
   c. Display of library information about materials, programs, or services at child's eye level.
   d. Display of booklists, brochures, flyers for distribution.
   e. Bulletin or cork board to allow for involvement-type displays: i.e. suggestions, complaints, notes left for friends with paper and pencils at eye and reach level for children.
   f. Display of book reviews with accompanying books and other related materials at child's eye level.

3. Specifications:

   a. Bulletin board with push pins (push pins may be dangerous - co-alternatives desirable such as staples).
   b. Glass case for one or two untouchables.
   c. Accessible case or cases (easy to see and reach) for three dimensional touchable objects.
   d. Holder to keep give-aways in an orderly condition with nearby display explaining at child's eye height and within reach.
   e. Board to place small shelves for individual books or small objects (integrate many types of materials).
   f. Low table type arrangement with low sides to hold manipulative exhibits (called sand tables).

E. The Information Area

Card Catalog

1. Needs:

   a. Low enough for child to use.
   b. High enough for adult comfort.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Include print and non-print materials.
   b. Interfile cards which are coded by non-print symbol which becomes part of the call number to indicate type of material (book, recording, filmstrip, etc).

3. Specifications:

   a. No more than 36" high.
   b. No lower than 18" high.

Professional Materials File

1. Needs:

   a. Near reference desk for easy use by staff with public.
   b. Low enough so does not obstruct vision or create barrier to patron.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Include bibliographies, booklists from many sources.
   b. Include reprints of articles.
   c. Author/speaker information.

3. Specifications:

   a. Two-drawer, legal size file.
   b. Pamphlet boxes on shelving.

Atlas/Dictionary Stand

1. Needs:

   a. Provide surfaces for easy use.
   b. Low enough for use by children.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Slide out shelves for storage of volumes.
   b. Storage for more than one volume.

The Information Desk

1. Needs:
   a. Easy accessibility to all items frequently used in circulating area.
   b. Small and low enough so it does not create psychological or physical barrier.
   c. Chairs for patrons consulting librarian.

2. Considerations and possibilities:
   a. Storage for:
      1. handouts
      2. pencils, drawing paper
      3. records of group visits
      4. reference log forms
      5. reserves
      6. program calendar for scheduling appointments
      7. et cetera
   b. Storage for headphones and circulating AV materials.
   c. Secure area accessible to staff only.
   d. Carpeting.

F. Circulation Area (if not centralized).

1. Needs:
   a. Desk at child height.
   b. Clearly defined bins or other area for receiving returned materials.
   c. Clearly defined area for checking out materials.
   d. Area for checked-in materials waiting sorting for library staff engaged in processing returned materials.

2. Considerations and possibilities:
   a. Storage for registration files.
   b. Storage for circulation materials (extra cards, pamphlet envelopes, Realia bags, etc).
   c. Shelf space for reserves, books to be considered for binding, mending, or discarding, some bibliographic tools and indexes, etc).
   d. Storage for circulating AV equipment.
   e. Storage for any headphones, room toys, etc. which are kept in desk.
   f. Drop the floor level behind low circulation desk to allow easier use by adult desk attendants.
   g. Area for storing and access to circulation trays if book card charging (e.g. Gaylord) is used.
   h. Sorting shelves and/or bins for books, records, periodicals, Realia, pictures, etc. near circulation area but out of traffic flow.
   i. Carpeting.

3. Specifications:
   a. Circulation desk height 30"-36" (Walker, Fleet).

G. Coat Racks

1. Needs:

   a. Scaled to child sizes.
   b. Plenty of storage area for boots, coats, books, lunch boxes.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Separate area near outside entrance perhaps placed for supervision by staff.
   b. Hooks at child height.
   c. Low shelf to sit on while putting on boots.
   d. Storage under shelf for boots.
   e. Shelf for gloves, lunch boxes, etc. overhead or elsewhere within reach of children.
   f. Separate small "cubby holes" for storage of possessions with option to personalize.

H. Rest Rooms

1. Needs:

   a. Some fixtures scaled to young child's height.
   b. Facilities to conform with federal regulations regarding civil rights of the handicapped.
   c. Provide safety features.
   d. Placed for supervision by staff.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. If separate children's room rest rooms are not provided, the general use rest rooms should be placed so that children do not have to cross adult circulation, reading, or reference areas.
   b. Two stalls seem to reduce vandalism in toilets.
   c. Some mirrors, wash basins, towel dispensers at young child's height.
   d. Child protected lock (door always opens for person inside even though it has been locked plus access from outside in emergency).

I. Drinking Fountains

1. Needs:

   a. Some scaled to young child's height.
   b. Easily operated by young children.
   c. Step stool for access to very small children.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Protected (e.g. tilted) area on walls and floor surrounding fountain.
   b. Placed for supervision by staff.

J. Staff Work Areas*

Department Heads Work Area

1. Needs:

   a. Privacy for uninterrupted work, and to confer with staff and users, both singly, and in small groups.
   b. Easy access to the children's room/sliding door desirable.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Desk with typing platform.
   b. Shelves.
   c. Files.
   d. Comfortable chairs.
   e. Phone with intercom (for larger libraries) and outside lines.
   f. Ample electric outlets.
   g. Herman Miller office components designed by Propst.

Individual Work Stations for Staff

1. Needs:

   a. Privacy to work away from the public.
   b. Need for own work area for efficiency and production.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Desk with typing platform.
   b. Bulletin board space for memos (above desk).
   c. Work storage space.
   d. Chairs.
   e. Access to phone.
   f. Electric outlets.
   g. Panels or dividers between work stations.
   h. Shelves and filing space.
   i. Herman Miller office components designed by Propst.

Staff Conference Area

1. Needs:

   a. Place for private staff meetings.
   b. Space to work on projects; spread out materials.
   c. Space to confer with volunteers, committees, etc.
   d. Provide necessary equipment for maximum efficiency.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Formica counter with storage space above and below (built-in sink).
   b. Free-standing Formica island counter.
   c. Ample number of chairs, book trucks, typewriters, adding machines, etc.
   d. Central place for staff bulletin board for assigned duties, posting schedules, etc.

*While reading this section refer back to the Checklist of Behind the Scenes Staff Work

Staff Conference Area (continued)

e. Provide storage space for:
   1. department files.
   2. catalogs.
   3. story telling collections and materials.
   4. craft materials.
   5. handouts, brochures, booklists.
   6. display materials (should be easily accessible, clearly and efficiently organized).
   7. office supplies.
   8. circulation supplies.
   9. AV supplies.
   10. processing supplies.
   11. for materials (book and non-book) being processed, or revised, or awaiting repair.

f. Shallow tray storage for construction paper, poster board, posters.

g. Bins for non-book materials.

h. Shelving needs:
   1. for all types and sizes of materials.
   2. for efficiency are best between eye and knee level.
   3. should have movable label holders.
   4. can be designed as shallow bins with gliders.

Note: The organizational pattern of the individual library will determine whether such space must be provided within the children's department or within an overall technical processing and/or an overall circulation department. In some libraries, programming activity material space is provided within the programming room. It is important to consider the overall plan of service before determining a new arrangement for these materials.

K. Lockers

1. Needs:

   a. A secure place for each staff member to store coats and other personal effects.

L. The Program Room

1. Needs:

   a. A warm welcoming atmosphere.
   b. Comfortable seating.

2. Considerations and possibilities:

   a. Remember small and medium-sized groups need to be accommodated.
   b. A variety of seating possibilities.
   c. Tables for messy work (folding and adjustable).
   d. Supplies to be used should be nearby.
   e. Some movable or storable display units.
   f. Whole area able to be easily cleaned and relatively indestructible (i.e. indoor-outdoor carpeting).
   g. Access to water.

The Program Room (continued)

h. Enough electrical outlets appropriately placed.
i. If films to be shown - carpeting makes sound better; bare floors make sounds echo.
j. Secure storage space for projector, or projection booth and adjacent light switch.
k. Tight blackout shades if films to be shown - very important!
l. Projection wall or retractable screen.
m. Storage space within or adjacent to program room for all items used there.

3. Equipment:

a. Movable chalkboard.
b. Movable bulletin board.
c. Movable display units.
d. Stackable chairs.
e. Chairs and tables must be proper heights for varying sizes of children and adults.
f. Storable, folding tables.
g. Extra book truck with flat shelves.
h. Easel.

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